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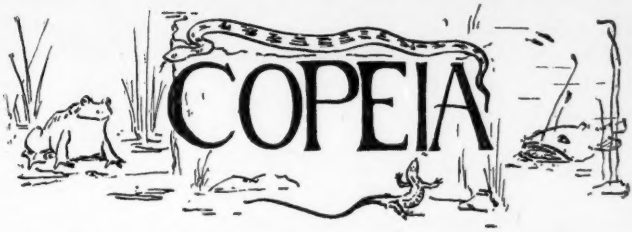
New York, January 25, 1915. No. 14



Published to advance the Science of cold-blooded vertebrates

DO SNAKES SWALLOW SMALL MAMMALS HEADS OR TAILS FIRST?

While in the Yosemite valley, July 11-15, 1914, I saw three individuals of the rattlesnake (*Crotalus oregonus*) of that region. Two of these were seen July 13, just above Nevada Falls at an elevation of about 6,000 feet, on the trail to Clouds Rest. The third was seen July 15, in the entrance to the valley near Cascade Falls, elevation about 3,445 feet. The first of the two seen on the way to Clouds Rest was lying on some rocks at the side of the trail. It was, of course, soon killed by members of our party.

The snake was about two feet long and had seven rattles and a button. A very noticeable swelling or enlargement just amidships, as well as its sluggish condition, suggested that it had recently swallowed an animal of some kind.

Like Kipling's Elephant's child, we were all filled with "insatiable curiosity", and not being afraid of being spanked, at once asked a new fine question: "What did the rattler have for breakfast?"

The obvious way to find out was to cut the rattler open, which we proceeded to do. I held the snake with my left hand near its head and the other abaft the swelling, while Mr. C. E. Crunsky performed the surgical operation, and the new fine question was answered—the rattler had a fine adult Merriam Chipmunk (*Eutamias merriami*) for its breakfast. And the *rattler had swallowed it tail first!* The head of

the chipmunk was towards the snake's head, and its legs, tail and fur all lay back toward the snake's tail, smooth and in perfect order. This surprised us very much. We could hardly see how the chipmunk could go down tail first without turning the tail, or some of the legs, or the fur, the other way. We could scarcely believe our own eyes; some of the party were even disposed to grant there had been an error in observation. But as all members of the party (there were six or seven of them) were agreed as to the fact, it is evident that this chipmunk had been swallowed tail first.

A few days later Dr. J. Grinnell sent me a photograph taken August 1, 1914, by Mr. Edward R. Warren of Colorado Springs, which showed a gopher snake in the act of swallowing a chipmunk tail first—only the head of the chipmunk remained exposed.

BARTON WARREN EVERMANN,
San Francisco, Cal.

SOME AMPHIBIANS NEW TO WHITEFISH POINT, MICHIGAN

During the summer of 1914, the biological survey of the Whitefish Point region, Chippewa County, Michigan, which is being made by the University of Michigan Museum of Zoology, was continued, and additional data on the reptile-amphibian fauna were secured. The three amphibians listed below were obtained for the first time, and increased to sixteen the total number of species known to occur in the region. (See Ann. Rept. Mich. Acad. Sci., 1912, pp. 215-217.)

Ambystoma jeffersonianum (Green).—Found under old logs at the edge of black ash and cedar swamps.

Diemictylus viridescens Rafinesque.—But one specimen was obtained. This was found in a decayed log at the edge of a marsh.

Hyla pickeringii Holbrook.—Common in the hardwood forests and tamarack swamps.

HELEN THOMPSON GAIGE,
Ann Arbor, Michigan.

THE GENUS CRYPTOTOMUS COPE

A recent examination of the type species (*C. roseus Cope*), compared with other members of this genus, convinces me that at least two well-marked groups occur, which may be admitted to sub-generic rank. They may be set forth as follows:

Sub-genus *Cryptotomus* Cope.

Type *Cryptotomus roseus* Cope.

Body elongate, labroid in appearance. Front profiles attenuate. Cutting-edge of jaw teeth formed of several overlapping series, each tooth distinct, and posterior flaring out behind. Scales on breast greatly enlarged. One row of large scales on cheek. Dorsal spines very flexible.

One species, brightly colored.

Sub-genus *Nicholsina* sub-gen. nov.

Type *Cryptotomus beryllinus* Jordan and Swain.

Body moderately long, scaroid in appearance. Front profiles gently convex. Cutting-edge of jaw teeth formed of nearly continuous or single series, with only few anterior distinct. Free posterior canines frequent. Scales mostly uniform in size, not enlarged on breast. Cheek with one or two rows of large scales. Dorsal spines flexible.

Several species, small, and usually of dull or olive coloration. Besides the type, they are *C. dentiens* (Poey), *C. retractus* (Poey), *C. ustus* (Valenciennes) and *C. auropunctatus* (Valenciennes), in America.

Dedicated to Mr. John T. Nichols, of the American Museum of Natural History.

HENRY W. FOWLER,
Philadelphia, Pa.

A NOTE ON A DRAWING OF CARANX BARTHOLOMAEI CUVIER & VALENCIENNES.

In the Fishes of North and Middle America, Jordan & Evermann (Bull. 47, U. S. Nat. Mus. vol. iv., 1900), plate CXLII, fig. 389 is erroneously labelled *Caranx latus*. This drawing was made by H. L. Todd from a specimen collected by Vinal N. Ed-

wards at Woods Hole, Mass., U. S. National Museum No. 20247. Upon examining the fish in the container to which this number is given (labeled *C. fallax*), the writer found seven specimens, six of these were *C. bartholomaei* and one was *C. latus*. From the form of the fish, the lack of elevation of anterior rays of soft dorsal and anal; the greater number of soft rays (26 dorsal rays in drawing, 21 or 22 in *latus;* 22 anal rays in drawing, 16 to 18 in *latus*); the absence of a black blotch on opercle; the short maxillary, its tip not reaching anterior margin of pupil, and curved and straight portions of lateral line subequal, it is evident that the drawing was made from one of the specimens of *C. bartholomaei*.

LEWIS RADCLIFFE,
U. S. Bureau of Fisheries.

DEKAY'S SNAKE IN THE LATE FALL

Previous to November 26, 1914, there were several drops of temperature to below the freezing point, 18 degrees above zero being reached on one occasion. On the above date, the weather was milder, the thermometer registering as high as 50 degrees. While the writer was walking near the corner of Kingsbridge Road and University Avenue, he found a young DeKay's snake (*Storeria dekayi*), about 8cm. in length. It was quite active and when released, quickly disappeared under the dried grass.

LEE S. CRANDALL,
New York, N. Y.

Edited by J. T. NICHOLS, American Museum of Natural History
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